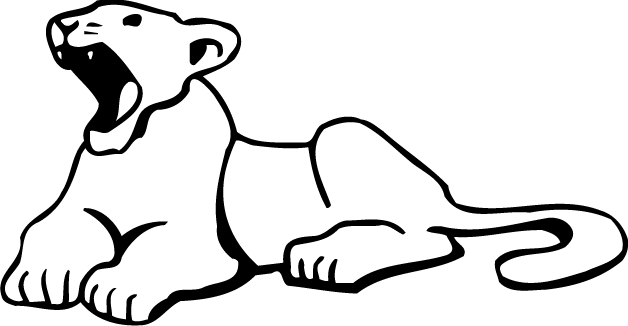


A Σ K

Women in Technical Studies



*Our purpose is to promote friendship, academic achievement, unity within the organization, and philanthropy throughout the community.*

*We are a sorority of women committed to achieving our academic goals and promoting women in technical fields through leadership, friendship, and support.*

Est. 1989

Beta Chapter

University of Oklahoma

Norman, OK

[www.askbeta.org](http://www.askbeta.org)

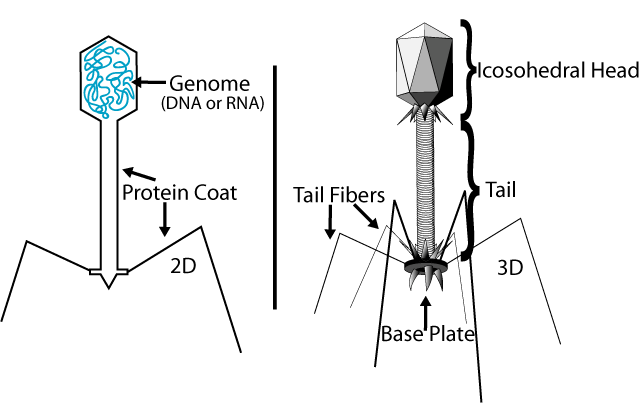
Uh…So what is a sorority, anyway?

Sorority. The word strikes fear loathing, and a rather deep-seated distrust of those organizationy-type things into the hearts of most self-respecting anti-establishmentarians. But this sorority is a bit different…

We are fierce individualist women in technical studies. We are conquering male-dominated fields single-handedly! We are obliterating stereotypes, busting through glass ceilings, and in general kicking butt and taking names. So, do you want to take over the world with us?

While we are busy being world-leading nerds, we do like to take a break and hang. We are here for each other, in the homework and social sense. Boys, jobs, assorted drama, and life in general are common topics we discuss. We all understand what you are going through, and we often help each other with the road ahead. However, sometimes we get lost in the moment of drinking tea and watching anime together. So don’t fear, the sisters are here!

One sister, Rachel Shadoan, accurately described this organization as a virus.



**Scientific name:** Alpha Sigma Kappa

**Incubation period:** One semester

**Symptoms:**  Buffoonery, excessive giggles, maniacal world-

domination tendencies, inappropriate dinner conversations, friendships stronger than duct tape, excessive use of duct tape, superior knowledge of various random theories and their application to real life, the sudden desire to calculate the gravitational pull of a refrigerator on a fork while floating in a vacuum, the inability to squelch the desire to see what happens when someone eats Mentos after drinking Diet Coke, general weirdness, etc. etc. etc.

**Treatment:** Frequent contact with your sisters. No cure is currently available.

Nerd girls, unite!

Alpha Sigma Kappa is a social sorority for technical majors. The social part of that equation means that we spend a lot of time having fun together. The technical part of that equation means that we accept undergraduate and graduate students in Architecture, Engineering, Mathematics, and the Sciences (Zoology, Microbiology, Biology, Chemistry, Biochemistry, etc. etc. etc. Our sincerest apologies to the Underwater Basket-Weaving majors—might we recommend a double major in Industrial Engineering and Underwater Basket-Weaving?) It also means that we are sincerely dedicated to our studies. We have to be, or we’ll be eaten alive by (insert most difficult course here). We are, by and large, hopelessly nerdy.

The advantage of the overwhelming nerdiness is that it is highly likely that one of your sisters will have taken (insert most difficult course here) and either loves it or can at least do it in her sleep, and will be able to help you with it. We swap books and solution techniques, hold study nights and encourage each other to relax. After all, (insert most difficult course here) is not the beginning and end of all things. This support will help you succeed in your major, and prevent you from dropping out, buying a Volkswagen bus, painting it psychedelic colors, and spending the rest of your life selling t-shirts by the river.

Some historical context

AΣK began at the University of Minnesota as a little sister organization to the Triangle Fraternity, a national engineering and technical fraternity with whom we remain close. On May 1, 1989, the members of this little sister group organized themselves and formed a local social sorority for young women studying engineering, mathematics, architecture and the sciences. This change created a stronger, more unified group. Since then, AΣK has continued to grow. The Beta Chapter was founded at the University of Oklahoma on September 13, 1997

Gasp…there are more of you?

Currently, there are seven chapters nationwide. We’re the Beta chapter, which was the second chapter formed (after the original Alpha chapter). The other chapters are in six different states. The Alpha chapter is located at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, MN; the Gamma\* chapter is located at the University of Louisville in Louisville, KY; the Delta\* chapter is located at the University of Texas at Arlington; the Epsilon chapter is located at Iowa State University in Ames, IA; the Zeta chapter is located at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, in Baltimore, MD; and the Eta chapter is located at New Mexico Tech in Socorro, New Mexico. Don’t worry; there won’t be a test over this information, at least not for a while. What you should note for now is that the splendid thing about having sisters spread across the country like this is that there are plenty of people to couch-surf with while road-tripping.

\*Gamma and Delta Chapters are no longer active. The alumnae chapters still exist.

What do you guys do, anyway?

Well, every Sunday evening we get together to talk business. We iron out things like who will bring the ice cream to the ice cream social, and who will get those funky flyers approved. Towards the beginning of the semester we're frequently occupied with getting our name out there so that other ladies in technical studies can be carriers of the AΣK virus. We organize a team for the Big Event, plan monthly dinners, and schedule coffee together often. We also plan AΣK/Triangle dinners. (Triangle is our male counterpart). We discuss where we would like to go for retreat. Retreat is one weekend a semester when we drive to a reasonably secluded location, often out of cell phone range, and bond. It’s a chance to recharge our batteries, renew our commitment to our sisters, and stay up until the wee small hours of the morning laughing. We also arrange carpools, fawn over our new candidates, and schedule and reschedule study night. A lot of scheduling goes on, generally speaking—AΣK ladies are busy people.

But that's all business. We also do a lot of fun stuff. Every week we have a non-business bonding night. We get together and play Apples to Apples, go bowling, or just talk. We go Christmas caroling and have themed dinners (my favorites have been "sandwiches" and "food on a stick"). We shop together and in general spend a lot of time hanging out (occasionally while avoiding homework.) In short, we eat, we drink (mostly Dr. Pepper) and we are merry.

Oh, and we also try to take over the world.

When and where are weekly meetings held?

Weekly open meetings are generally held Sunday at 6:30 pm in the Union. Should you forget the room or time, you can always give one of the active members a ring and they will direct you, or you can check the schedules posted near the union doors or on our online calendar. Open meetings typically last an hour, and anyone is welcome to attend. Only initiated members can attend closed meeting, which is where we do all the fun stuff like plot world domination, open portals to hell, and steal miniature ponies. (We are only kidding, of course—or are we? Initiate and find out.)

How much time will AΣK siphon from my calendar?

Siphon is such an unpleasant word. We really prefer “borrow” or “enhance”.

Being women in technical studies ourselves, we understand that your time is a precious, precious commodity. In fact, you should take a look at our calendars. It’s pretty crazy stuff. So we will work to accommodate you and your commitment to academics as much as possible. That said, the time commitment involved in Alpha Sigma Kappa depends on what stage of involvement you are at.

New members, aka candidates, are required to attend weekly open meetings (about an hour), weekly candidate education classes (also about an hour), and whatever social activities they are able to participate in (anywhere from 0-5 hours, depending on how social we are feeling in a given week). So your first semester in Alpha Sigma Kappa, we lay claim to at least two hours of your time. We would, however, love to see you more—after all, the weekly meetings aren’t quite as fun as the social stuff.

Initiated members are required to attend weekly open and closed meetings (2 hours, sometimes less), fundraisers (when we have those, which is not often), candidate events (one a semester, typically about 2 hours), all ceremonies (there are two a semester, occasionally three), and whatever social activities they are able to participate in (we have one bonding/social activity night per week, which can last anywhere from one to seven hours, depending on how excited we get).

See, it’s not so much! We’re sure we can pry you away from the Mentalist and Mythbusters long enough bask in your radiant company each week (or watch them as a group!). Beyond the two hour a week commitment, your amount of involvement is up to you. If there are weeks when you want to live, breathe, and eat Alpha Sigma Kappa, that can be arranged. On the other hand, if you’ve got a couple of weeks when you’re too bogged down with calculus to eat, we understand that, as well. (We’ll also bring you food, so that you don’t starve to death.)

Will AΣK siphon money from my pockets?

Yes, but only a little.

Your candidate semester (your first semester as a member, before you are initiated), your dues will be $145.00. This goes towards your handbook, your membership notebook, the candidate recognition pin, an Alpha Sigma Kappa t-shirt, ceremonial costs (portals to other worlds are expensive to open), and National dues. They also go towards fun social things.

As an initiated member, aka actives, your dues will be $175.00 per semester. This goes towards things like the Alpha Sigma Kappa world domination fund, the Alpha Sigma Kappa charter jet fund, and other necessities such as insurance. Mostly, however, dues cover the cost of retreat and other such splendid things. The dues can be paid in monthly installments, pillowcases full of pennies, or in one lump sum. The treasurer would appreciate if you did not attempt to pay your dues in chickens, goats, unmarried girls, or any other form of currency unrecognized by the American federal government. The treasurer also has a complete breakdown of where the funds go.

How do I join Alpha Sigma Kappa?

Come hang out! That is your first step. If we don’t know who you are, we are not likely to call you up and invite you to join. We have weekly meetings, study nights, and a slew of other events coming up in the next few weeks. In addition, there are a couple of other eligibility requirements.

* + Have a cumulative GPA of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale.
  + Have declared a major in one of the accepted technical fields (Architecture, Engineering, Mathematics and the Sciences)
  + Be enrolled at least part-time at OU
  + Not be a member of another social sorority
  + Attend a minimum of three chapter sponsored events during our rush

What will happen if I accept an invitation?

First, you’ll go through the candidate ceremony with other members of your candidate class. Then, with your new class-mates, you’ll spend a semester familiarizing yourself with the history, the National organization, and the local chapter. After this period, if you love us as much as we love you, you will be initiated into the sorority.

Who are the members of Alpha Sigma Kappa?

A lot of extremely cool ladies, that’s who. This picture was taken after the initiation of the Alpha Zeta Class. 